

ACT 373

S.B. NO. 1919

A Bill for an Act Relating to the Legislature.

Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Hawaii:

SECTION 1. In response to increasing interest and involvement in the legislative process on the part of Hawaii's citizens, the legislature has continued to expand its public access programs. Some of these programs include:

- (1) Live and delayed television broadcasts of legislative sessions and hearings;
- (2) The operation of the widely-used public access room at the state capitol; and
- (3) The maintenance of on-line networks that readily provide public access to legislative data and information, including: bill status; the text of bills, resolutions, and committee reports; public hearing schedules; information on individual legislators; introducers of bills; and voting records.

Although these activities have proven successful, the legislature finds that more improvements are necessary to conduct legislative business more efficiently and to ensure that the public continues to be kept apprised of legislative proceedings.

The purpose of this Act is to increase public access to the legislative process and to enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of the legislature by:

- (1) Establishing the legislative broadcast program in the state capitol as a permanent part of the legislature's public access program;
- (2) Providing equal access to legislative broadcasts for all citizens in the State;
- (3) Appropriating moneys to replace the legislature's existing computer information system.

PART I. LEGISLATIVE PUBLIC ACCESS

SECTION 2. Chapter 21G, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is amended by adding a new section to be appropriately designated and to read as follows:

“§21G- Legislative broadcast program established. (a) There is established in the state capitol a legislative broadcast program that shall become part of the legislature's permanent public access program.

(b) The legislative broadcast program shall be supervised by the joint legislative access committee established pursuant to section 21D-6.”

SECTION 3. The legislature finds that on Oahu, legislative proceedings are broadcast at convenient times for most residents. However, neighbor island residents can view legislative broadcasts only during late night hours, starting at 11:00 p.m., because the public community television stations do not have the equipment to tape and replay the legislative proceedings during more reasonable hours.

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The purpose of this section is to remedy this inequity by providing grants to community television stations on Hawaii, Maui, and Kauai to permit legislative telecasts to be taped and replayed during hours that are more convenient for viewers on the neighbor islands.

SECTION 4. There is appropriated out of the general revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$75,000 or so much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 1997-1998, for grants-in-aid to purchase taping and other equipment needed for rebroadcasting the state legislative programming:

Ho‘ike Kauai	\$22,379
Akaku: Maui Community Television	\$20,323
Na Leo ‘O Hawaii‘i	\$32,298

The sum appropriated shall be expended by the legislature for the purposes of this part.

There is appropriated out of the general revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$175,000 or so much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 1997-1998, for the legislative broadcast program, including the production and distribution of television broadcasts of legislative proceedings during fiscal year 1997-1998.

The sum appropriated shall be expended by the legislature for the purposes of this part.

SECTION 5. There is appropriated out of the general revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$1,500,000 or so much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 1997-1998 for the purpose of replacing the existing legislative information system.

The sum appropriated shall be expended by the legislature for the purposes of this part.

SECTION 6. Statutory material to be repealed is bracketed. New statutory material is underscored.¹

SECTION 7. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 1997.

(Approved July 3, 1997.)

Note

1. Edited pursuant to HRS §23G-16.5.